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Sent: Thursday, March 09, 2006 4:30 PM

To: DHS COBBH

Subject: FW: Integrating the Dental Profession into the fight against HIV/AIDS

Importance: High

FYI.

The Dental School at the National University of Mexico will appreciate your help in disseminating the announcement of our **International Symposium**

“Integrating the Dental Profession into the fight against HIV/AIDS”

Mexico City. May 4-5, 2006.

Organized by the Dental School National University of Mexico (UNAM) in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), HIVdent, and the Organization for Safety and Asepsis Procedures. Co-sponsored by the International HIV/AIDS training program at Emory University.

“HIV/AIDS is the greatest health crisis the world faces today....The burden of HIV/AIDS, including the death toll among health workers, is pushing health systems to the brink of collapse...The crisis in the health workforce facing many countries has implications...for the viability of health systems. Expansion of human resources for health is a critical need” [WHO].

Human resources are the most critical component of HIV testing and counseling services, and their shortage is an obstacle to universal coverage. In many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, the health systems and services required to deliver care and treatment to people living with HIV are inadequate and are not expanding rapidly enough to satisfy demand. [PAHO].

Timely diagnosis and referral to antiretroviral therapy (ART) help people with HIV/AIDS live longer and healthier lives. HIV infected individuals who know their positive status reduce risk behaviors and become proactive in prevention. In contrast, individuals who are unaware of their HIV infection will continue to be the source of new infections.

Oral healthcare providers (OHCP) are in a unique position to be mobilized for early diagnosis of HIV/AIDS, referral to ART and contributing to multidisciplinary attention to HIV/AIDS patients.

This symposium addresses the rapidly growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in Central America and the Caribbean, where there is a shortage of trained human resources to identify HIV infections early and refer HIV-positive individuals promptly to ART.